

Trickery

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Trickery

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Summary

A special Halloween occasion.

Being clever had always been Satsuki's prerogative. At least, that seemed to be the case whenever Ryuko had the spare mental capacity to compare their wits against each other. It just seemed that more often than not, Satsuki had a plan. Something, typically, in comparison to Ryuko's own nothing. She debated sometimes that it was a trait that she found both endearing and frustrating in her older sister. It being the topic of more than a few heated disputes between them.

But that wasn't going to stop Ryuko from at least attempting to try and plan something for Satsuki. Even if it meant consulting people she would rather avoid like the plague. And after some time, even those particular people started to blend into her, and their, life, as if it had always been the case.

"So whatchya been up to lately, Nonon?" Ryuko asked. Peering over the rim of her coffee cup to where Nonon sat across the table. Her own cup cradled precariously in her tiny hands as she attempted to sip at her beverage past a mountain of whipped cream.

"Lately? Mostly getting some compositions together for a few concerts happening during the winter season... Oh! And I've been helping out with getting a haunted house setup for Halloween."

"Halloween?"

"Oh please tell me you aren't that daft." Nonon quipped as Ryuko attempted to not lunge over the table and throttle her on the spot.

"Shut it, snake. Of course I know what Halloween is but why a haunted house? Is it a school thing?"

"Nope. It's starting to get popular with the kids these days," a moment passed as Nonon sipped at her beverage, "Sanageyama figured we could profit off it while also having ourselves some good ol' fun."

"Is it gonna be actually scary?" Ryuko asked. Fully insinuating she thought the idea was subpar at best.

"I don't deal in half-baked pranks, Matoi. This is something I plan with the same diligent and meticulous nature as Satsuki-sama herself."

"So on a scale of one to ten..." and at this point, Nonon stared pointedly at Ryuko. Her leg thumping against the underside of the table they were seated at.

"I hired a clean up crew. For the vomit, piss, and shit I hope to elicit from naive high schoolers."

"Oh." Ryuko paused. Suddenly desiring a conversation change no matter how troublesome it got. "You know... why did you never throw a huge fit over- well, Satsuki and I?"

If Nonon was surprised she didn't show it. The only noticeable change in her demeanor being the softening of her pink-hued eyes.

"I mean, you were so calm about it, yah know? I figured you were going to like, slit my throat in my sleep or-"

"Your mistake was taking my calmness as a sign for lack of lividness. To which my answer is: I was plenty livid." this time when Nonon drank from her beverage it was a hearty gulp. "As to why I didn't show it, it's because I'm not a fucking tornado of emotion like you. Constantly having to make sure everyone around me knows how I feel."

"Oy." Ryuko warned, to which Nonon waved her hand. Dismissing Ryuko's anger with the flick of her wrist.

"There was no way in hell I was going to behave that way in front of Satsuki-sama. No matter how upset I was at the time." Ryuko made as if to speak again but Nonon quieted her with a single raised index finger. "And as time went on, I started to realize it was for the better. Did I adore and love her for many years? Yes. Did I fap off to the thought of her occasionally? Yes."

"Please don't speak about my sister that way." Ryuko's response came together with a deadpanned expression. One that Nonon paid no mind.

"But the thing was, when all was said and done and our lives weren't in danger anymore, we all just sorta... changed. Not in any kind of good or bad way, get where I'm coming from?" she asked and Ryuko nodded her head in understanding. "Then suddenly you and her were inseparable. When I found out, I was angry, yes, but after a month or so it wore off and it just made sense. You two, I mean."

"Aaaaawww," Ryuko faked wiping a tear from her eye, "Never knew you cared so much."

"Shut the hell up, Matoi." there was venom in her glare and the promise of scalding coffee on skin. "I'll still slit your throat if you hurt her."

"Yea yea," a moment passed where the silence was comfortable between them, ending with Ryuko sighing in melancholy. Drowning it briefly with a bit of coffee before speaking. "Shit with Satsuki can just be so tricky at times. Like, I can't even come up with a date idea as good as the ones she comes up with. And I've been wanting to surprise her with something nice for a while now."

"Satsuki's foresight can be uncanny, I agree. It's probably impossible to even get half a step ahead of whatever hair-brained scheme she's cooked up." another moment passed where Ryuko watched Nonon fidget uncomfortably before continuing. "I'll admit, that's something I wouldn't want to have to deal with. Not in a relationship sense."

"It's gotten easier to see where she's coming from but that doesn't make it any simpler to surprise her with something." Nonon nodded in agreement slowly only to suddenly jolt. Her legs connecting with the underside of the table with a painful sounding thwack!

“Oh holy shit, bring her to the haunted house!” Ryuko recoiled.

“What? Hell no! That’s a terrible fucking idea!”

“You wanted to do something that Satsuki would never be able to predict, right? This is it! And on top of that, Sanageyama and I get to have a little fun to boot!”

“Dude, you’re asking for something terrible to happen. I just know it.”

Nonon brushed off the accusation with another wave of her hand. “Have a little faith, Matoi! C’mon, pretty please? I’ll even front yah the tickets so you don’t have to pay.”

“Eeeurrrgh…” and even as she groaned out her displeasure, Nonon was already sliding two tickets across the table to where she sat. Eyes wide and filled with hope. “God fucking damnit- fine!”

Ryuko snatched them up and began to stuff them into the inner pocket of her jacket. All while Nonon fist pumped. “Yes! Awesome! October thirty-first, text me when you get there so I can get you to the front of the line.”

And with that, Nonon finished off the rest of her coffee and escaped from the little shop before Ryuko could rethink the transaction.

“Oh?” there was a hint of playfulness to Satsuki’s voice that Ryuko could garner. “A haunted house?”

“Eeeh heh, yep!” Ryuko attempted to conceal the overwhelming feeling of dread she was experiencing as they approached the wrought iron gate surrounding the estate. The briefest flashes of lights through trees illuminated a mansion that could rival their own.

“Admittedly, I hadn’t pinned you for the… sort.” she grinned slightly, staring pointedly at Ryuko until she turned her head. Moving to hide the blush she could feel rising on her cheeks.

“W-what are you talking about? I love haunted houses!” reaching into her pocket, Ryuko busied herself with sending a short text message to Nonon. “C’mon, let’s head up to the front, Sats. I’ve already got tickets.”

“So prepared. Very unlike you.” Satsuki took a step closer and cupped Ryuko’s hand in her own. An act that left Ryuko too flustered to talk, so instead she decided to tug them forward. Entwining their fingers and moving them closer to where she figured the entrance was.

If the haunted house had mostly been put together by Nonon and Sanageyama, Ryuko had to admit it was well done. Not the typical high schooler digs with paper bats and styrofoam headstones. This place was an actual house, decked out with mechanical monsters that moved further off in the bushes, lights that activated depending on how close you got, and the eeriest music that had Ryuko squeezing Satsuki’s hand a bit tighter. Something that, when Ryuko

glanced over at Satsuki during the many moments she was prone to doing so, she seemed not to notice.

“Ah, there you are! Been lookin’ all over for you!” a familiar high-pitched voice greeted them from the outskirts of a crowd before Nonon appeared from between two teenagers. She murmured a few harsh words at them before meeting Ryuko and Satsuki halfway. Ryuko had to stifle a snicker at the ridiculous butler outfit she was in. Her face painted with the visage of a skull.

“Good evening, Nonon.” Satsuki greeted her as if she’d known Nonon had been there the entire time.

“Lady Satsuki.” Nonon greeted with a saccharine tone. “Matoi.” her greeting to Ryuko was less warm. “Shall we?”

She seemed excited. Far too excited for Ryuko’s comfort level. But she never got the opportunity to question it as she was suddenly being dragged towards the entrance by Satsuki herself. The act in itself hardly comforting.

"Alright you two. Ready for some terror?" Nonon had guided them to the entrance of the mansion. The small alcove of which was occupied with another group of teens. Their fate suddenly bundled together with that of Ryuko and Satsuki's.

"Unfortunately." Ryuko groaned as she attempted to nonchalantly lean closer to Satsuki. Who merely nodded in confirmation to Nonon’s question.

“Look at those two,” a female voice attempted in a hardly concealed whisper behind them, “I wish I could get along with my sister like that...”

A snort caught Ryuko completely unaware and caused her to glance up at Satsuki. Only to find there was a knowing grin plastered to her face. She looked over and caught gazes with Ryuko briefly, managing to get a wink in before Ryuko had to look away. Her heart laboriously thumping inside her chest while her face mimicked being a tomato. Attempting to focus on anything else, Ryuko’s eyes landed on a highly perturbed Nonon. Of whom, Ryuko could swear, was internally screaming so loudly that it was audible.

“Ok. That’s it. Let’s go. Get your asses in the house.” Nonon knocked three times on the door before it swung open. It’s hinges direly in need of a good oiling with the way they squealed. Then before Ryuko could get a word in edgewise they were being pushed into darkness. The only light source being a small flashlight Nonon had produced from somewhere on her body.

They’d been crammed into a foyer. The room almost painfully silent aside from the panting of everyone within in the space. As the door shut behind them one of the girls let out a high-pitched squeal. The noise causing Ryuko to cling to Satsuki’s arm as the rest of their group began to laugh tentatively about their friends outburst.

“Don’t touch the actors, they won’t touch you, and yada yada. Good luck!” with a flourish, Nonon turned from the group to push open a set of double doors. Deep lavender lighting

filled the space and before Ryuko could observe the foyer area, they were being shuffled awkwardly into the new space.

It was incredibly unassuming and was supplied with sufficient light from sconces higher up on the walls. Enough so that Ryuko could make out the intricacies of certain things. Like the seemingly expensive rug underneath their feet, keeping them from trampling over wooden flooring, and the stoic painted busts of people on the walls. All in all, there was nothing seemingly frightening about the space and she found herself suddenly aware of the way she had been clutching to Satsuki's arm.

"Erh- sorr-" she'd been halfway to apologizing to her sister for being so handsy when a loud thump resounded to her right. Ryuko immediately stiffened, her fingers once again curling into the fleece fabric of Satsuki's trench coat.

She didn't really want to look in the direction of the noise but when another, even more boisterous, thump echoed from the same place she glanced. Spotting that there was nothing there at all. Just the painted visage of a regal elderly man. But even as she continued to stare at it, wary of looking at anything else for fear of spotting something unnatural, there came the slightest brush against her ankle.

"Euw-!" her feet left the floor for an instant at the sensation, only for every hair on her body to stand on end when she looked back at the painting.

The man was gone. Then something brushed against her leg again and when Ryuko finally managed to convince herself to look down there was nothing there either. And yet, even as she watched, the sensation came again.

This was, possibly, the worst date she could've chosen to wear a skirt to.

"Mmm, clever."

Ryuko had nearly forgotten entirely about Satsuki until she muttered those words. Too caught up in the moment when one of the girls behind them screamed. Exclaiming loudly about having felt something against their leg. Ryuko chose not to speak up about her own experience. Belligerently denying that it had happened to begin with.

Just as quickly as things had started to go weird, they went weirder. A groaning noise came from back behind them. Towards where the double doors had been shut tight. Revealing that they were once again open. The foyer area exposed, revealing another set of doors beside the entrance. Already opened, beckoning them with a welcomingly warm light.

The group that had entered into the mansion with them, began to move towards the newly unbarred area. Leaving Ryuko and Satsuki to bring up the rear. Something that Ryuko felt wholly uncomfortable about and as she reached up to smooth over the goosebumps that had risen on her neck, she look a glance back.

Standing behind them was the man from the painting. His clothing tattered and eyes a milky white. Even when Ryuko spotted him, he didn't move. Just continued to watch them.

“S-s-sa-ssa-” for the life of her she couldn’t get her sister’s name to cross the threshold of her lips. Eyes still glued to the man even as she was forcibly dragged from the area by Satsuki herself. As they rounded the corner into the new room, Ryuko could swear the he had grinned menacingly at her.

“Oh?” Satsuki cooed as they entered the area. A place that had seemed well lit, only to turn out to be a farce. Above the entryway shone down the beam of a spotlight. The rest of the room was pitch black.

It took Ryuko all she had to pry her eyes away from staring behind them. Worried she’d catch the old man creeping up. When she finally looked back in front of them, the group they’d entered with was gone. Not even the sound of them shuffling across the floor could be heard. The silence was deafening.

Ahead of them, out into the blackness, Ryuko could’ve sworn she saw a slight glimmer. Like someone waving a flashlight at just the right angle. Much to her relief, Satsuki had seen it as well. But to her chagrin, Satsuki also began to pull them away from the bright light of the spotlight and out into the darkness.

Ryuko knew she shouldn’t have even been surprised. But that didn’t stop her from having to cap her mouth with her hand when she felt something flutter against her shoulder. Then again against her ear and the top of her head. All the while she continued to grip Satsuki’s hand in her own, it being the only life line of confidence she had in that moment.

As they moved forward the room began to brighten again. Revealing that the sensations Ryuko had felt before had merely been shreds of trash can bags hung from the ceiling at intervals. She’d been about to point it out to Satsuki and get a good laugh out about it when she felt something firmly grasp her shoulders.

Or someone.

The scream that had been about to rip from her chest, never got the opportunity. Ryuko wasn’t certain when she had closed her eyes, but all she could make out of the situation that followed was a powerful wind beside her then the sounds of a wall being blasted out. When she opened her eyes it was to the sight of Satsuki still posed with her leg in the air. Perfect form. Even as she continued to hold Ryuko’s hand as if she’d never moved at all.

Lights immediately started to come on throughout the room, followed with the sounds of hectic shouting.

“You have got to be shitting me!” Nonon’s voice was the first that rang out clearly enough for Ryuko to hear coherently. “I told you not to do anything stupid, Uzu!”

“Oh, good. It was just Sanageyama, then.” Satsuki spoke up and Ryuko looked up at her. Watching as she slowly lowered her leg from the kicking position she had been in before. Ryuko’s face was stuck in between horror and disbelief. “Still alive?”

“Hmrrn-” the sound of loose rubble moving accompanied Sanageyama’s reply, “Good to know- you’re still in top form- Lady Satsuki...”

“You guys didn’t even make it to the last room before you destroyed the place!” Nonon was standing above where Sanageyama was attempting to remove himself from a pile of bricks. Her index finger and thumb squeezing the bridge of her nose in disgust.

“I will have the damages covered, Nonon.” with a still speechless Ryuko in tow, Satsuki had dragged them over to stand beside her. The amusement Ryuko garnered from watching Sanageyama pull himself from the mess he’d created slowly bringing her back out the stupor she’d been cannonballed into. She made sure to note the fact he’d been the one dressed up as the old man. It would come in handy later for belittling purposes. “But I do believe that was quite enough excitement for us this evening.”

“I told you this was a terrible idea!” finally finding her voice, that was all Ryuko could produce before being escorted by her sister from the premises.

Ryuko had remained uncharacteristically quiet for the remainder of the night. Even during the car ride, when Satsuki had turned on her favorite radio channel, she continued to keep her lips sealed. Not even singing along with songs that Satsuki always heard her sing too.

It was after they had clambered into bed, bodies fresh from showers they had both desperately needed after the haunted house, that Ryuko finally spoke up.

“I- Sats. I’m- uh. I’m sorry...” the sudden confession had taken Satsuki by surprise. Causing her to come to a full stop in the middle of slipping her arm underneath Ryuko’s head. “I mean- for the date. It was a bad idea. I didn’t mean to-”

“I thoroughly enjoyed it.” she cut Ryuko off. Going back to slipping herself comfortably beside Ryuko. One of her hands coming to rest on top of Ryuko’s hip as she brushed her fingers through the hectic mess of Ryuko’s freshly washed hair with the other.

“R-really?” Ryuko locked eyes with her. Disbelief strongly written across her features.

“Of course. After all, I got to spend time with you.” she smiled softly, catching the moment Ryuko’s face lit up from the action. “And getting to do so means the world to me.” There passed a moment where all they did was grin at each other across the scant distance between them. “Did you truly think I would let anything harm you in there?”

Ryuko’s blush deepened to an almost unhealthy shade of scarlet at the accusation. “W-w-what?! I w-wasn’t scared!”

It took everything Satsuki had not to roll her eyes before placing the pad of her thumb against Ryuko’s lips to hush her. “Ryuko.” she let a few seconds slide by before continuing to speak. “May I kiss you?”

They hadn’t yet experienced a fitting moment to share in a first kiss, and Satsuki had been wondering when the time would come. Or if a time would truly need to present itself for such. But the way that Ryuko responded only in a nod, and the slight intake of air she took

just before Satsuki pressed their lips together, was all she needed to confirm that her timing had been perfect.

And though it didn't last as long as she had hoped for, the feeling of Ryuko's toes curling against her shins, and the way her eyes fluttered closed, made it a flawless moment. Followed up with a dozen more of the same. Some of them being delivered by herself, and the others by a tentative Ryuko. Enough to drown Satsuki in a euphoric sensation that had her grinning wide. Teeth flashing between innocent pecks.

When the moment had passed, and they'd buried themselves together in each others embraces, Satsuki spoke.

"I love you, Ryuko."

"Yea... I love you too, Sats."

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